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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1032

UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 000391

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR DS/IP/WHA, WHA/EX, MGSF01

E.O. 12958: N/A:
TAGS: [KFLU](#) [AEMR](#) [ASECCASC](#) [KFLO](#) [TBIO](#) [KSAF](#) [KPAO](#) [PREL](#) [PINR](#)
AMGT, MG, ES
SUBJECT: MGSF01: EAC MEETING: H1N1 FLU UPDATE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 378

¶1. Post's Emergency Action Committee (EAC) held a follow-up meeting on April 29, 2009 to review the Mission's preparedness as the USG had upgraded the level health emergency for H1N1 Flu. (Note: per reftel, EAC had an initial meeting on this same subject on 4/26. End note.) Charge Blau chaired the meeting. Post's EAC believes that appropriate health and security measures are in place at this stage. Post has updated its tripwires in the Emergency Action Plan and created an EAP Annex that specifically addresses pandemic flu response.

¶2. The MDRO reported that there are no confirmed cases here in El Salvador, however there are at least three suspected cases. Unfortunately, no labs in El Salvador have the diagnostic capability to conduct the more refined tests necessary to confirm the strain of the virus. The GOES is sending samples to the CDC for confirmation testing.

¶3. According to the MDRO and DAO, the GOES currently has a limited supply of anti-viral drugs (approximately 1000 doses). The GOES is taking proactive steps, to include the issuance of an emergency declaration on 4/28/09, which frees up funding to purchase more anti-viral drugs. According to the MDRO, the GOES is coordinating with the governments of neighboring countries in order to procure additional anti-viral drugs in a bulk purchase. Additionally, the ICE Attache reported that the GOES has installed heat sensors at the airport to screen incoming passenger for fevers and is conducting visual screening of passengers to look for other symptoms.

¶4. The Health Unit covered precautionary measures that personnel should take, such as hand-washing and avoiding contact with sick individuals. This information has been passed to all staff. Additionally, the health unit discouraged sick individuals from coming to work, or if already at work, into the health unit (located in the chancery) and risk contaminating the building. Instead, the health unit recommended treatment at home. The health unit further advised that they have an adequate supply of anti-viral drugs on hand to treat personnel, but that the drugs are most effective if administered within 24- to 48-hours of symptom onset.

¶5. Management advised that schools attended by mission children are aware of the situation and most are taking active measures to monitor the student populations for signs of illness. The exception is the French School (attended by two mission children), which is waiting for official guidance from the GOES before changing the current operating posture. Management reiterated the need to be prepared for social distancing and potential quarantine, should it become necessary.

¶6. Consular has issued a warden message, that has also been placed on the embassy web-site, advising private American citizens of the status of the evolving outbreak. Peace Corps advised that all volunteers are issued anti-viral drugs as part of their medical kits and that Peace Corps El Salvador has additional drugs available should volunteers need them. Peace Corps is examining restricting volunteers from traveling outside of the country, lest the borders be sealed causing the volunteers to be unable to return. Peace

Corps El Salvador is working with Peace Corps Washington to determine the best solution.

17. (U) Post will update accordingly.

BLAU